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NECROLOGY.

HUGH SMITH THOMPSON, a member of the South Carolina Historical Society, died at his residence, 55 East 53rd Street, New York City, on the night of Sunday, November 20, 1904. He was born in Charleston, S. C., January 24, 1836. He was reared in Greenville District, S. C., where his father, Henry T. Thompson, farmed, at the foot of Parris Mountain. He was a grandson of Hon. Waddy Thompson, one of the Chancellors of the Court of Equity of South Carolina for many years, and a nephew of Gen. Waddy Thompson, sometime a member of Congress from South Carolina and minister to Mexico during the Harrison-Tyler administration. He was graduated from the South Carolina Military Academy in 1856, and a year later was elected an assistant professor at the Arsenal Academy at Columbia, and rose by regular promotion to captain, having filled the professorships of French and Belles-Lettres. During the State's Rights War he was transferred to the Citadel Academy in Charleston and saw service with the battalion of Cadets in Charleston and at other points in the State until the end of the war. After the war he was elected principal of the Columbia Male Academy and brought that institution to a high state of excellence. In 1874 he was elected president of the Richland Rifle Club, the forerunner of the Governor's Guards militia company. The Richland Rifle Club took a prominent part in the trying episodes of 1876, and under Thompson's captaincy the Governor's Guards won the prize at the Inter-State drill at the State Fair at Columbia in 1877. On the organization of the Richland Battalion he was elected major, commander, and later was elected colonel of the Palmetto Regi-

ment, and commanded the provisional regiment which the State sent to the Yorktown celebration in 1881. In the State Democratic Convention of 1876 he was unanimously nominated for State Superintendent of Education, although not a candidate for the nomination, and was unanimously renominated in 1878 and in 1880, and would have been renominated without opposition in 1882 had he not withdrawn at the request of leading members of the Board of Trustees of South Carolina College, who desired to press him for the presidency of the College to succeed President Wm. Porcher Miles, who had resigned. He was offered the superintendency of the South Carolina Military Academy at Charleston in the same year and declined it. When the State Democratic Convention met in Columbia in 1882 there were two announced candidates for the office of governor. Quite unexpectedly Hon. W. L. Mauldin, of Greenville, nominated Col. Thompson. Hon. E. B. Murray, of Anderson, arose and announced that Col. Thompson had requested him to say that he was not a candidate and could not be a candidate and that if the Convention nominated him it would be the wish of the Convention and not his. Col. Thompson afterwards sent a peremptory demand that his name be withdrawn, but the Convention preferred him and he was nominated. He was renominated in 1884 without opposition and reelected. In 1886, at the request of President Cleveland, Governor Thompson visited Washington, and, shortly after his return to Columbia, the President offered him the position of United States Commissioner of Education, but he declined it. On the 28th of June, 1886, the President tendered him the appointment of Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, which he accepted, resigning the office of governor. Owing to the illness of Secretary Manning, and, later, to the frequent absence of Secretary Fairchild, who succeeded Manning, he was often at the head of the Treasury Department. As such head he occupied, temporarily, a seat in the President's Cabinet, and it fell to him, on more than one occasion, at times of great financial crisis in Wall Street, to avert public panic by his

coolness, foresight and business acumen. During the summer of 1887 the Department bought from \$10,000,000 to \$12,000,000 worth of Government bonds. On September 21st., on the eve of a public crisis, in order to strengthen public confidence in the Government, Governor Thompson, who was acting as Secretary at the time, suggested to the President that a circular be published offering to purchase \$14,000,000 more of the bonds. When the circular appeared on Wall Street the next day the effect was electrical and the crisis was averted. After the defeat of the Democratic ticket in 1888 President Cleveland nominated Assistant Secretary Thompson for a position on the Civil Service Commission, but the Senate failed to confirm his nomination. After the inauguration of President Harrison seventy-five out of seventy-six United States Senators petitioned the President to appoint former Assistant Secretary Thompson to the same position and the nomination was accordingly sent to the Senate on May 7, 1889, and it was promptly confirmed. When the New York Life Insurance Company was reorganized in the spring of 1892, former Secretary of the Treasury Fairchild was made chairman of the board of trustees, and, at the same time, the office of comptroller was created by the company and was offered to Commissioner Thompson who accepted it, and in this position he served until his death.